

Transportation External Coordination (TEC) Working Group
Communications Topic Group
DOE Transportation Program/Shipping Campaign Key Messages

“Big Picture”

- ❖ There are many reasons for transporting radioactive materials throughout the country. Research and development, medical uses, defense, industrial use and utility use are a few. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is one of many organizations and agencies involved in radioactive materials transportation.
- ❖ The U.S. Department of Transportation regulates shipments of radioactive and hazardous materials to protect public health and safety. Hazardous materials that are commonly transported include flammables and explosives, such as gasoline and propane, corrosives, such as car battery (sulfuric acid, and poisons, including chlorine. Typical radioactive materials shipments are non-explosive, non-flammable and unlikely to be immediately harmful, even in an accident.
- ❖ America’s nuclear waste cleanup is a national effort. Some sites are better able to handle/dispose of certain types of radioactive waste. An effective environmental cleanup therefore requires the ability to transport some waste between sites.
- ❖ Environmental cleanup at (name of site) is essential to protect (name appropriate resource). Cleanup at (name of site) requires the transport of radioactive waste through (name of state or community).
- ❖ For example, AEnvironmental cleanup at Hanford is essential to protect the Columbia River. Cleanup at Hanford requires the transport of radioactive waste through Oregon.

Or

- ❖ “Cleanup at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory is essential to protect the Snake River Aquifer. Cleanup at INEEL requires the transport of radioactive waste through Idaho.”

Transport-related

Safety is the first priority.

DOE’s radioactive/nuclear material transportation activity is a cooperative effort among corridor states, tribes, local officials and DOE shipping programs.

The transport safety program is based on the US Department of Transportation regulations. When packaged (contained) and shipped in accordance with the regulations, radioactive/nuclear materials are safe for the public and the environment. DOE’s interaction with states, tribes, and local officials in support of its radioactive/nuclear material transport activities goes beyond what is required by law and the regulations.

The transport safety program is proven.

There are not hazardous materials shipments on the road that have undergone as much scrutiny by state, tribal and local transportation safety specialists as DOE radioactive/nuclear material shipments.

7/01

¹This document is intended to assist in efforts to communicate about radioactive materials transportation in a manner that is responsive to the needs and concerns of stakeholders. The Communications Topic Group of the U.S. Department of Energy’s Transportation External Coordination Working Group (TEC/WG) reviewed and/or prepared this document. The TEC/WG was formed in 1992 to improve coordination between DOE and external groups interested in the Department’s transportation activities. The membership of the TEC/WG includes representatives of national, state, tribal, and local government organizations, labor, industry, and professional groups.